

REMARKS

Claims 1-28 were pending.

Claims 1, 3-5, 8-11, 13-15, 18-20, 22-24, 27-28 stand rejected.

Claims 1, 11, and 20 have been amended.

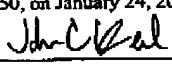
Claims 2, 9 - 10, 12, 19, 21, and 28 have been cancelled.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Appreciation is expressed for the indicated allowability of claims 2, 6-7, 12, 16-17, 21, and 25-26. In response, Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 11, and 20 to include the limitations of claims 2, 12, and 21, respectively, placing claims 1, 11, and 20 in condition for allowance. Claims 3-8 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least this reason. Claims 13 - 18 depend from claim 11 and are allowable for at least this reason. Claims 21 - 27 depend from claim 20 and are allowable for at least this reason.

CONCLUSION

In view of the remarks set forth herein, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is solicited. Nonetheless, should any issues remain that might be subject to resolution through a telephonic interview, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the numbers provided below.

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| I hereby certify that this correspondence is being faxed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA. 22313-1450, on January 24, 2005. | |
|  | <u>1/24/05</u> |
| Attorney for Applicants | Date of Signature |

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